Members Present: Carol Sobetzer (at-large); Mark Avery, Bruce Lyndes, Sandra Smith-Ordway (Fairlee); Cicely Richardson, Vanessa DeSimone, Marc DeBois (Orford); Dawn Stever, Jennifer Shatney (W. Fairlee); Kathy Hooke, Jennifer Ricker (Vershire).

Administrators and Staff Present: Brenda Needham (Superintendent); Keri Gelenian (Head of Schools/RA Principal); Gail Keiling (Head of Elementary Schools/SME Principal); Joan Holcombe (WES Principal); Michael Galli (RA Dean of Students).

Others Present: Georgette Wolf-Ludwig, Stephany Clark, Renee Ivey, Sam Ivey, Moriah Ludwig, Kasey Clark; Stephanie Wright and Tori Hebb (Student Representatives to the Board); David Hooke (moderator).

David Hooke administered the Oath and swore in the new Board Members.

I. Call Meeting: Meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

II. Board Reorganization – Action: Motion made nominating Carol Sobetzer for Chair, and Sandra Smith-Ordway for Vice Chair. Approved.

III. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation: None at this time.

IV. General Public Comments (Listen & Defer Action to Future Mtg.): None at this time.

V. Presentation/Guests
   A. Odyssey of the Mind (G. Wolf-Ludwig)
      Eighth grade Odyssey of the Mind team (Sam, Mariah and Casey) presented an update of their OM State finals. They reported that the high school team won third place, and that the 8th grade team won first place in the state competition and the Ranatra Fusca award which is the highest award given during the competition. With Board approval, the 8th grade team will compete at the Nationals held in Maryland. Georgette stated that they hope to begin fundraising and the first event is “A Night of the Stars” on April 27 when they will be performing their long-term problem and offering a pot luck w/raffle. Dates for Nationals: May 27 – 31; registration cost is $2400; lodging and food, transportation to and from Maryland; approx 12 participants. Superintendent Needham is going to look into the possibility of using District vans/busses. She also recommended that the announcement be publicized on the website. Action: C. Richardson made the motion to support OM with $1000; Lyndes seconded. Approved. C. Sobetzer directed them to proceed with their fundraising efforts.

VI. Consent Agenda (Accept)
   A. Minutes (March 1, 2011)
   B. Superintendent Report (written) – Needham read Dana Jacobson-Goodhue’s resignation letter and commented that we appreciated her work this year.
   C. Head of Schools Report (written) – Gelenian also reported on the NECAPs and AYP with the need to do better in math and science. Stever asked how we are making the test important and Gelenian responded that they are aware of that being an issue. Discussion revolved around how this information is then used and reflected on. DeSimone asked about procuring these tests and what skills are being developed in
the classroom for standardized testing and Gelenian responded that if students were thinking critically, they would have done better. It is an ongoing, across-the-board effort. Keiling stated that math scores have been low for a few years and there is no reason that our students shouldn’t be performing better. Gelenian shared that students are being taught how to get an answer but not why this works. Hooke questioned, if scores are lower, is the schedule addressing this and possibly tracking? Keiling answered that is a complex issue and at the heart of it, NECAP asks open ended, problem solving questions that require deeper thinking. Regarding the Learning Expectations – Smith-Ordway asked if perhaps “demonstrate perseverance” should be included in all categories, not just the two that it was already listed in. Rubric – some minor questions and corrections were given to Gelenian.

D. **RA Student Representatives** – No written report received. Student Government President, Stephanie Wright, reported that they have drafted several revisions to items in the student handbook addressing cell phone usage; dress code, seniors, senior projects, senior privileges; graduation requirements (walking, etc.). Parking space is an ongoing complaint/issue - believed to be more of an issue in the spring as more students get their licenses. Lyndes asked if all students deserve a parking spot and have they considered a lottery. Sobetzer asked if they had discussed how they could use the space differently. Galli mentioned extending the parking lot. Needham is working w/Gary Collins (building/grounds) because it’s a grounds issue. A student-initiated petition is being circulated regarding WiFi usage that is no longer available to personal computers. Needham recommended that this is part of a larger policy issue regarding cyberbullying and safety and it should be discussed at the next Board meeting.

E. **Principal Reports (written)** – Keiling added that Sara Rose had two groups who placed first and second in eCybermission which is a program that gives students in grades 6-9 a chance to identify problems in their community, run experiments, and propose solutions. She hopes they will be coming to the next Board meeting to present. Holcombe spoke about open houses in each grade for parents to see the curriculum in action and that a group of parents have organized to participate in forums and discussion. June 2 – 250th celebration. Orford Historical Society asked Gordon Christie-Maples to be part of their organization. Hooke asked all Principals about percentages of families that participated in 3-way conferences. Administrators will get back to Board with those numbers.

**Action:** Motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda with the minutes of the March 1, 2011 amended. **Approved.**

**VII. Ongoing Business (Deliberation & Possible Action)**

A. **Annual Meeting Review** – Richardson appreciated responses from Needham and Gelenian at the meeting. Discussion revolved around the comments regarding Orford’s percentage share. Lyndes wondered if we should respond to specific questions; discussion revolved around the comments regarding Orford’s percentage.

1. **Appoint Auditor** – Needham referred to a discussion she had with Peter Berger regarding the process of the audit and review of information and she will share with Dick Paulson. **Action:** Motion was made to appoint Peter Berger for Auditor. **Approved.**

**VIII. New Business (Receive Information & Possible Action)**

A. **Approve Teacher Contract Renewals for 2011-2012**

Brenda reported that April 15 is the deadline for contracts that are being put together right now.
B. Board Dates for the Remainder of 2010-2011
   1) May 3 and June 7. **Action:** Motion made to approve as noted. **Approved.**

C. Board Committees Regrouping
   Long Range Planning & Finance are now merged as one committee and Smith-Ordway reported they are working on a new charge due to this combination. Other committees should meet and review/update goals. All Board members are invited to attend upcoming Finance/LRP meetings in order to participate in the brainstorming while using the Strategic Plan as a guiding document to plan and assess what goals have been met and still need to be worked on.

D. Strategic Plan – Next Steps
   SIT meeting minutes in Board packet include an update on the Strategic Plan.

E. Graduation Requirements
   Discussion revolved around the students and their needs; meeting graduation requirements when they are not fully prepared to do the work in classes. Reviews are going on for a number of students who have had individual plans created to insure their success. Question regarding change in total credits from current was brought up because it appears to be a decrease. Gelenian will review and get back to Board with update.

F. Correspondence
   No written correspondence. Smith-Ordway shared that Fairlee town vote regarding Act 144 passed. Fairlee will no longer be participating in Act 144.

IX. Future Agenda Items (Discussion)
   Hooke requested that Kindergarten numbers for next year be included.

**Action:** Motion made to go into executive session at 8:50 p.m. **Approved.**

X. Anticipated Executive Session (Discussion), 1 VSA § 313
   A. Contract Negotiations
      Board came out of executive session at 9:38 p.m.

**Action:** Motion made to accept Dana Jacobson-Goodhue’s resignation. **Approved.**

XI. Adjournment (Action): **Action:** Motion made to adjourn at 9:39 p.m. **Approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Smith-Ordway, Recorder